



The Official EduGuide for

WHEN WE RISE

THE MINISERIES FROM ABC STUDIOS

IT GETS
BETTER
PROJECT

Contents

03

A Letter from Dustin Lance Black

04

Introduction to *When We Rise: The Miniseries*

07

Introduction to *When We Rise: The Official EduGuide*



DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY GUIDES

09 LESSON PLAN 1:

Defining Family

14 LESSON PLAN 2:

Exploring Identity

19 LESSON PLAN 3:

Living Authentically

24 LESSON PLAN 4:

Securing Equality

29 LESSON PLAN 5:

Marching Forward

33

Glossary of Terms

36

About It Gets Better Project and Live Out Loud

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LIVE OUT LOUD!

abc studios

A Letter from Dustin Lance Black

History isn't only about looking backward; history is about gathering the knowledge that gives us the wisdom to avoid old mistakes, and the power and inspiration to create a stronger today and a better tomorrow for ourselves, our families, and our neighbors.

History can also help people of diversity feel less alone in their struggles. History makes it clear that throughout time, people of diversity have faced similar challenges, overcome great hurdles, found hope, liberation, and even happiness.

Unfortunately, LGBTQ+ people don't have a complete, well-recorded history yet. Until recently, being LGBTQ+ was considered a felony and misidentified as a mental illness in many places in our world. An LGBTQ+ person could lose their job, home, family, community, be thrown in jail or a mental institution, or even put to death just for being who they are. So it should come as no surprise that few were brave enough to memorialize their LGBTQ+ experiences, the stories of who we are, how we've survived, and how we've come to thrive. So too many of our great stories have been lost, buried by fear and shame.

But today, more and more LGBTQ+ people live in areas with basic protections, and are freer to record our stories without repercussions. We can make movies, television shows, write books, plays, record podcasts and radio shows about our forefathers and foremothers without being thrown in jail. And we can place those stories alongside the proud histories of other civil rights movements that have fought for justice, freedom, and equality. My dream is that a well-recorded LGBTQ+ history will help build bridges between our LGBTQ+ family and other minority families who have fought hard for their own truth and freedom. This was the aim when we created *When We Rise*.

When We Rise does not tell the complete history of LGBTQ+ people. No one project could ever accomplish that. *When We Rise* focuses on San Francisco from 1971 to 2013, and was built from the true experiences of

a handful of real activists who fought for LGBTQ+ equality without ever forgetting their connections to the black civil rights movement, the women's movement, and the peace movement. These real life heroes understood the power of working together and intersectionality. That's why the most important word in the title is "We." And if you're reading this, you are a part of that "We!" Because every single person in the world today is a minority in one way or the other, it just depends on how you slice the pie. We're all different. So we all have an interest in protecting the right to be different.

I hope that this series inspires you. I hope that after studying *When We Rise* you feel stronger. I hope you will seek out more stories of people who overcame great challenges. I hope that some will even do research, pick up a pen, and record more of our lost histories. But most of all, I hope that no matter who you are, and whatever your beautiful difference may be, this series assures you there have been brave people fighting for minorities to be treated fairly despite their differences for a very long time, and that although there is more work to be done, things can get better.

DLB

Creator of the
When We Rise Miniseries

INTRODUCTION TO *WHEN WE RISE*:

The Miniseries

WHEN WE RISE, an ABC Studios miniseries created by award-winning filmmaker Dustin Lance Black, examines 45-years of history within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) battle for civil rights in America. Inspired, in part, by LGBTQ+ activist Cleve Jones' memoir - *When We Rise: My Life in the Movement* - the miniseries profiles the lives of several community members as they struggle and triumph personally, professionally, and politically as pioneers of the gay and lesbian rights movement. Taking enormous risks to ensure a more equitable America, the stories of each member of the *When We Rise* story shows the power of love and perseverance, the struggles and triumphs of living authentic lives, and the enduring influence of a committed and courageous group of people.



ABOUT THE EPISODES



NIGHT I (Parts I and II)

In 1972, with a backdrop of war and social unrest, Cleve Jones, a young gay male activist, Ken Jones, a sailor who served in Vietnam, and Roma Guy, an activist standing up to homophobic practices in the National Organization of Women (NOW), move to San Francisco and navigate new experiences within the burgeoning LGBTQ+ community. All three struggle with their hope for a new and more accepting life in San Francisco, and the realities of the social inequity faced by LGBTQ+ communities in San Francisco and beyond.

NIGHT II (Parts I and II)

Now 1977, Roma has traveled the country by bike working to raise money for a woman's center while her former partner begins to consider having a child in the midst of the political battle to pass Prop 6 in California, known as the Briggs Initiative. Working with Roma and others, Cleve sees Harvey Milk elected and then assassinated, shaking the community to the core. Finding love against the backdrop of the AIDS epidemic, Ken becomes involved in the fight for safer drug and sexual practices within the gay and black community, but time finds both Ken and his partner HIV-positive by the end of the episode.



NIGHT III (Parts I and II)

In the 1990s, the HIV and AIDS epidemic has taken hold of the gay male community, and we experience loss through the death of Ken's partner Richard and the beginning of his own decline into alcohol abuse. Cleve has taken his work around AIDS awareness to the White House with the AIDS Memorial Quilt and reads the names of the thousands lost to the disease. After moving to Palm Springs, Cleve tries to adopt an abused and neglected child, but loses her to social services due to his health status. Roma is still working within the political world while raising Annie, her partner's daughter, who struggles as the straight daughter of lesbians at the beginning of the new millennium.



NIGHT IV (Parts I and II)

With the election of the first black President and the passage of Prop 8 banning gay marriage in California, Cleve struggles with feeling disenfranchised within activist circles, but he becomes involved in the continuing efforts, eventually seeing Prop 8 struck down and the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) ruled unconstitutional. Ken struggles with the intersectionality of his faith, his race, and his sexuality, but finds a community of like-minded people through an LGBTQ+ accepting church, and finds closure with the pain of losing his two loves. Roma continues in her fight for health equity, marries her long-time partner, Diane, and becomes a grandmother to Annie's daughter, Justice.



ABOUT THE MAIN CHARACTERS



CLEVE JONES

An activist within the LGBTQ+ community, Cleve Jones was one of the founders of AIDS Memorial Quilt: The Names Project.



ROMA GUY AND DIANE JONES

Roma Guy and her partner Diane Jones co-founded the [San Francisco Women's Building](#), a center for the arts and community that seeks to build self-determination and advocate for equality across genders. The two also advocated for increased access to healthcare for women and those living with HIV/AIDS.



KEN JONES

Ken Jones, a Navy Veteran who fought in Vietnam, served as the chair for the [San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade and Celebration Committee](#) as the first African-American in that post.

OTHER KEY CHARACTERS FROM LGBTQ+ HISTORY

HARVEY MILK

Harvey Milk was the first openly gay politician elected in California and was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his work to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ people in America.

PAT NORMAN

Pat Norman founded the Lesbian Mothers Union to provide support on custody issues and other concerns for lesbian mothers, and worked on a multitude of LGBTQ+ and African American rights issues.

DEL MARTIN AND PHYLLIS LYON

Del and Phyllis worked tirelessly to decriminalize homosexuality in the 60s and 70s and were the first same-sex couple to marry in San Francisco in 2004, and again in 2008, after legalization of same sex marriage in California.

DR. MARCUS CONANT

Dr. Marcus Conant was one of the first doctors to diagnose and provide treatment for those living with AIDS and went on to found the [San Francisco AIDS Foundation](#).

BOBBI CAMPBELL

Bobbi Campbell was the first person to come out publicly as a person living with AIDS and as an activist for HIV/AIDS awareness and research.

CECILIA CHUNG

Cecilia Chung was a leader in the civil rights movement, and an activist for HIV/AIDS awareness, health advocacy, and LGBTQ+ rights in America.

INTRODUCTION TO *WHEN WE RISE*:

The Official EduGuide

TELEVISION provides us the ability to experience lives that are very different from our own, as well as provides the viewer with an opportunity to travel through time and across settings. *When We Rise* is no exception, allowing us to experience the LGBTQ+ battle for civil rights over a forty-year period and alongside many of the most inspiring and heroic leaders within the movement. We encourage you to watch the miniseries in its entirety.

Education about and discussion of this history and unique struggles plays a critical role in building understanding, empathy, and increased allyship for those who may be viewed as “different.” This viewer’s guide is designed specifically for educators to encourage dialogue and critical thinking with their students. Divided into five emergent themes that arise from the mini-series, the discussion questions and linked lessons, articles, and resources provide a plethora of opportunities to engage students in critically thinking about and analyzing the history and stories experienced through viewing the series.

Below are a few ideas on integrating some or all of this guide:

FLEXIBLE TIMING:

Watching the full miniseries and working through the entirety of this guide could make up a full unit in a typical classroom. However, the guide has been designed to allow educators to pull selections that best fit the needs of the individual’s educational setting. By showing short clips, an educator can do one or two activities, or the whole of the guide, based on the time available and the materials that will be most impactful for the educational setting.

FLEXIBLE SETTINGS:

This guide should be useful in any setting in which young people are learning and growing. From classrooms to clubs to parent groups and more, these lessons can be shared and adapted for a variety of experiences.

ENGAGING AND TELLING OUR STORIES:

The mini-series highlights the stories and lived experiences of Ken Jones, Cleve Jones, and Roma Guy, as well as other historic figures within the LGBTQ+ rights movement. In turn, the lessons and discussion questions seek to engage students and community members in connecting their own stories and experiences to those of the characters.

**BOTH LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS
AND ALLIES ENCOURAGED:**

This guide is not intended solely for an LGBTQ+ audience. It seeks to engage allies, and future allies, through the powerful stories of the characters of *When We Rise*. There is much for all of us to learn about the ways in which we engage with gender, sex, race, sexual orientation, and other identities.

ENGAGE!

This guide is but a starting point. The links in this guide will connect you to a variety of resources, and we encourage you to use keywords from each section to search for additional or alternate resources online that meet your needs or environment. Overall, we should consistently stretch ourselves to learn and take action to make a difference in this world. As we grow individually, we grow together as a more inclusive and thoughtful community.

**EACH SECTION IN THIS
GUIDE INCLUDES:**

A 5 minute or less video from a Live Out Loud role model to share a personal connection to the topic.

An introduction to the theme that can be directly printed and shared with students and staff.

Selected clips from *When We Rise* with discussion questions, additional resources, websites, and lesson plans. With these resources, educators can choose to have a discussion using the questions provided, or explore each discussion as a separate lesson, utilizing the linked lesson plans and resources.

A call to action with opportunities to get involved in making a difference within your community.

Links to continue learning more online

(NOTE: If a link doesn't work, search for the exact phrase as it's highlighted in this guide on the indicated website, or search for the phrase on Google and follow the first few entries for best results. Wikipedia is also a great source to learn basic information about historical figures, places, events, and more.)

Defining Family



"I was close to my grandparents. I grew up listening to their stories of World War I, watching the German dirigibles being shot down over London, and, of course, my mother's stories of the Depression and World War II, how each generation has its own epic confrontations that it must face."

CLEVE JONES
When We Rise, Night I

What does "family" mean to you?

Are they the people who gave birth to you or raised you? Are they the people that you're closest to and that you turn to in times of need? In this section, we will look at the ways in which "family" comes into play within the stories of *When We Rise*.



To learn more about how this theme relates to someone's personal story, watch this video from a [Live Out Loud](http://www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise) role model available at www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise and www.liveoutloud.info/WhenWeRise.

FAMILY AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

From the start of *When We Rise*, we are introduced to the complex relationships of fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, and the intricacy of navigating the intersections of love, loyalty, shame, and disappointment that color these bonds. As Cleve comes out to his father as gay, his father says, "You're my son. And I love you. And I will cure you of this." It is clear that his pain over his love and hope for a "productive" life for his son, and his homophobia and insistence that

homosexuality is a disease to be cured, are at odds in that moment.

As we move throughout the series, we see dozens of other family interactions and experiences, from Ken Jones' experience of living in a family situation with his lover and his lover's wife to Roma and Diane's experience in raising Annie in what is viewed as an "unconventional family." We see collectives throughout the LGBTQ+ community create "chosen" families, developing platonic relationships that mirror the care and support of a "traditional" family without the judgement or discrimination many members of the LGBTQ+ community face from their biological family members.

And, throughout each experience, we see that familial relationships for each of these characters, not unlike those that many of us experience in our own lives, are complex and complicated. Navigating the relationships of those closest to us and their acceptance of our authentic selves, can be rewarding and painful in equal measure. In this discussion, we seek to consider how these relationships shape the lives of each of the main characters, and in turn, how we relate to their experiences based on our own lived narratives.

Defining Family

CLIPS TO WATCH FROM *WHEN WE RISE*

Below are selected clips from *When We Rise* that pertain to the discussion questions, additional resources, websites, and lesson plans on the following pages. With these resources, educators can choose to have a discussion using the questions provided, or explore each discussion as a separate lesson, utilizing the linked lesson plans and resources.



NIGHT 1, PART 1: Cleve Jones comes out to his father and decides to leave for San Francisco after his father states that he will “cure him” of his “illness” using any means necessary.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

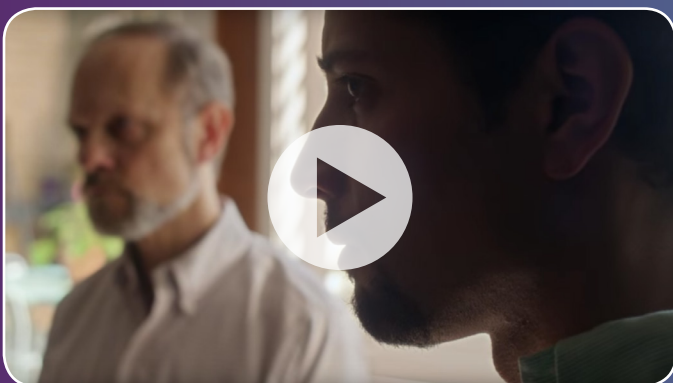
 **21:38–24:17**



NIGHT 2, PART 1: Roma’s mom tells her that she knows she is a lesbian and struggles to see the potential for happiness in Roma’s life.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **0:30–3:20**



NIGHT 3, PART 1: A series of clips in which a father explains his pride for his son who died from AIDS, Cleve shows what his relationship means to his father, and Ken turns to Cecilia as his chosen family in a time of need.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **15:02–19:26**



NIGHT 4, PART 2: Roma asks her sister to attend her and Diane’s wedding, pending the court’s decision.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **20:36–22:12**

Defining Family

DISCUSSION 1

- How do you define family?
- Where do you see evidence of “biological” family and “chosen” family throughout the series?
- Do you have a “chosen” family and what role do they play in your life?

LESSON PLAN

“Defining Self and Choosing Friends”
from the [POV Community Network](#)

Students will describe the factors that shape and shift self-identity and recognize how choices and perceptions fluctuate through our lived experiences. [auditory, visual]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[The Family Acceptance Project](#)



<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/>

DISCUSSION 2

- Why does Roma find it so challenging to share her sexuality and life with her family? How does that change throughout the miniseries?
- Later in the series, we see Roma call her sister to share the news of her wedding to Diane. What does the phone call with her sister about her wedding mean to her?

LESSON PLAN

“Pride and Family,” Lesson 6 in [Finding Pride](#)
from [It Gets Better Project](#) and [Journeys in Film](#)

Students will create comic strips to tell a story of characters sharing a difficult secret. [visual]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays \(PFLAG\)](#)



<http://www.pflag.org>

Defining Family

DISCUSSION 3

- How does the issue of wanting to have, having, and raising children come into play throughout the miniseries?
- How do you think growing up in a family with LGBTQ+ parents might differ with growing up with non-LGBTQ+ parents? How is it the same?

LESSON PLAN

“Family Identities”
from Moving People, Changing Places

Students will consider the aspects of identity and consider the impact on family history on identity.
[visual, discussion]

USEFUL ARTICLE

“Research Report on LGB-Parent Families”
from the Williams Institute



<http://thesafezoneproject.com/>

- What does this article conclude about LGB-Parent Families and why is it important?

DISCUSSION 4

We see a range of emotions play out among family members throughout the mini-series.

- Was there anything that resonated with your personal family experience?

LESSON PLAN

“Family Life”
from the Learning Network at The New York Times

Students will compare their own definitions of family to a variety of dictionary versions and will discuss and defend their opinions about complex family issues.
[visual, discussion]

USEFUL WEBSITE

Human Rights Campaign: Family Resources



<http://www.hrc.org/resources/all-children-all-families-additional-resources>

Defining Family



ACTION PROJECT

In May of 2017, a family court judge in Kentucky caused controversy when he announced he would refuse to hear any cases of gay and lesbian parents hoping to adopt. [The American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#), along with other rights groups, filed a complaint with the Kentucky Judicial Conduct Commission seeking the dismissal of the judge from the bench. To learn more, watch “[Groups Seek Removal Of Kentucky Judge Over Views On Gay Adoption](#)” by Wochit Politics at www.youtube.com.

Individuals, just like yourself witnessed an injustice, decided to unite against it, and take action. Now it's your turn to go out there and continue the fight for the rights of the LGBTQ+ community.

PART I

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Research how families are defined in your state. Key terms that will help you in your search are: family, parenthood, adoption, biological, caretaker, custody, recognition.

1. What policies are in place in your state when it comes to LGBTQ+ biological or adoptive parents? [Lambda Legal](#), the largest national organization for civil rights of LGBTQ+ individuals, has up-to-date information based on your state. To learn more, click [here](#), or go to www.lambdalegal.org and click on ‘Your Rights,’ then ‘In Your State.’
2. The [Family Equality Council](#), a group dedicated to connecting and supporting LGBTQ+ families, has an interactive map which helps you track bills occurring in your state. To learn more, click [here](#), or go to www.familyequality.org and click on ‘Get Informed,’ then ‘Advocacy,’ then ‘Take Action on State Policy.’

Are there any protections lacking in your state, or any changes you would like to see implemented?

PART II

TAKE ACTION

1. Using the Family Equality Council’s Elected Official Lookup, find your local representatives and write a letter or call to address the issue. To learn more, click [here](#), or go to www.familyequality.org and click on ‘Get Informed,’ then ‘Resources.’ Also, see “[Writing to Your Legislators](#)” from the [National Education Association \(NEA\)](#) or watch “How to Call Your Representative” by CFSACarolinaFarm at www.youtube.com.
2. If you want to take it a step further, connect to a local organization and find out about volunteer opportunities. The Family Equality Council has an interactive directory you can find if you go to www.familyequality.org and click on ‘Get Involved,’ then ‘Parent Groups.’

Remember, the figures in *When We Rise* weren’t superheroes, they were ordinary people who used their voices to create change. Use your voice and be the generation to change the world!

Exploring Identity



“Being black and gay? Those ideas don’t exist side by side for us. You gotta get to that truth sideways.”

KEN JONES
When We Rise, Night 2

How do the various facets of our identity intersect?

What does it mean to be black and gay or female and bisexual? Are there ways in which the components of your identity intersect to provide increased privilege or prejudice? In this section, we will look at the ways in which intersectionality comes into play within the stories of *When We Rise*.



To learn more about how this theme relates to someone’s personal story, watch this video from a [Live Out Loud](http://www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise) role model available at www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise and www.liveoutloud.info/WhenWeRise.

THE DEFINITION OF INTERSECTIONALITY

Noun. The idea that multiple identities intersect to create a whole that is different from its distinct parts. To understand someone, it is important to acknowledge that each of their identities is important and inextricably linked with all of the others. These can include identities related to gender, race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, age, mental and/or physical ability, and more.

From the start of *When We Rise*, we are introduced to complex intersections of identity and see evidence of intersectionality come into play in a multitude of ways. For example, Ken’s experiences as a gay male and a man of faith come into play

throughout the series, like when he is saved by the women of the church, but in a later scene he’s told that the LGBTQ+ individuals renting the church are unclean and is asked to cleanse the chapel using holy water. Cecelia loses her role as a court reporter despite “wearing men’s clothes” because she was too feminine due to her transition. Roma experiences fighting for both women’s rights and LGBTQ+ rights though lesbians were dissuaded from participation in NOW. We see power and privilege of one identity, such as being white or male, giving way to prejudice and challenge due to sexuality, health status, or gender identity.

However, these components of identity make us who we are and influence how we engage in the world. These experiences can also make us question ourselves and whether we can live as our

authentic self. For example, Ken has the experience several times throughout the series of having to consider “Am I gay or am I black?” as his lived experience continues to make him question whether he can truly be both at the same time.

The varied experiences of the characters throughout *When We Rise* push us to think about the ways in which our own identities intersect and challenge the ways in which the world views us and the ways in which we view our own place in the world. In our discussion today, we seek to consider how these components of identity, and the intersection of identities, shape the lives of each of the main characters and, in turn, how we might share some of those stories through our own varied and unique experiences.

Exploring Identity

CLIPS TO WATCH FROM *WHEN WE RISE*

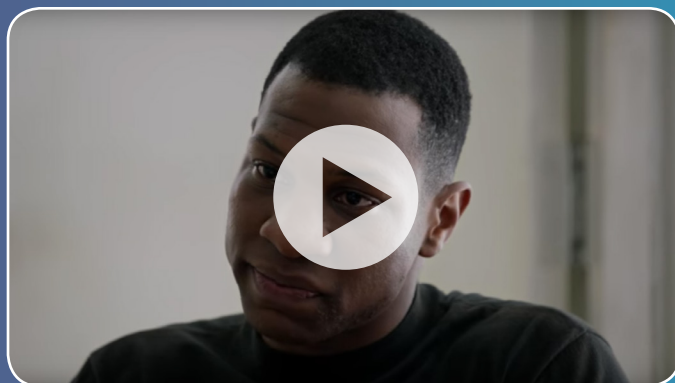
Below are selected clips from *When We Rise* that pertain to the discussion questions, additional resources, websites, and lesson plans on the following pages. With these resources, educators can choose to have a discussion using the questions provided, or explore each discussion as a separate lesson, utilizing the linked lesson plans and resources.



NIGHT 1, PART 1: Roma discusses her interest in the women's liberation movement in *NOW*, only to discover that lesbians are no longer welcome.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **8:34-10:06**



NIGHT 2, PART 2: Ken proudly and publically proclaims that he is a proud gay black man, hoping it will change perspectives on how others in his community are being treated.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **32:59-35:00**



NIGHT 3, PART 2: Cleve loses baby Courtney to child protective services (CPS) due to his HIV status.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **33:00-35:13**



NIGHT 4, PART 1: Ken finds himself caught between a message of love for the LGBTQ+ community and the women of faith that helped to save his life.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **10:29-12:04**

Exploring Identity

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss the differences and similarities in the experiences of the main characters in the series.

- What barriers do some face that others do not?
- How do race, gender, religion, health status, and other identity markers come into play for each character?

LESSON PLAN

“Exploring Identity and Intersectionality in Poetry” from [PBS NewsHour Extra](#)

Students will look at aspects of identity through an intersectional lens, in which they will examine the ways in which our identities intersect and are linked throughout our lived experiences.

USEFUL ARTICLE

“Why Intersectionality Can’t Wait” from the [Washington Post](#)



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4TRUCShh4wRWmRpQWxlaE14b1k/view>

- What does the author mean by “Intersectionality can’t wait?”
- Do you agree? Where do you see this at work in your lived experience?

DISCUSSION 2

Think (don’t speak) of stereotypes used against the following groups: black people, LGBTQ+ people, Muslims, women, people living with HIV/AIDS, people struggling with addiction, and Asian people.

- What are the consequences of these stereotypes?
- How have stereotypes of some of your identities affected you?

LESSON PLAN

“Pride and Race,” Lesson 3 in [Finding Pride](#) from [It Gets Better Project](#) and [Journeys in Film](#)

Students will create an identity web to consider which components of their identities do or do not intersect to influence their lived experiences. [visual, tactile, discussion]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[GLSEN: Resources for Being a Better Ally to Youth of Color](#)



<https://www.glsen.org/allyweek/betterallies/studentsofcolor>

Exploring Identity

DISCUSSION 3

- Are there spaces in your life where you feel completely valued and accepted for who you are?
- Have you ever felt an internal conflict with one or more of your identities?
- Explain how those differing experiences affect you.

LESSON PLAN

“Identity Signs” from the [Safe Zone Project](#)

Using posted signs of different identities, students will move around the room and answer a series of questions. [kinesthetic, visual, discussion]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[The Safe Zone](#)



<http://thesafezoneproject.com/>

DISCUSSION 4

On reflecting on her role as Roma Guy, actress Emily Skeggs expressed that the battle for civil rights for all marginalized groups is still relevant in America. She stated, “At the heart of intersectionality is empathy, and it takes muscle for people to come together despite differences. But, at the end of the day, that’s how you get it done.”

- Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Where do you see evidence of issues of intersectionality at work in our current political climate?

LESSON PLAN

“Pride and Faith,” Lesson 5 in [Finding Pride](#) from [It Gets Better Project](#) and [Journeys in Film](#)

Students will create an identity web to consider which components of their identities do or do not intersect to influence their lived experiences. [visual, tactile, discussion]

USEFUL ARTICLE

“Redesigned Pride Flag Recognizes People of Color” from CNN



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4TRUCShh4wRb1ZvRIB5Q2ZBWVE/view>

There were mixed reactions to the redesigned Pride flag for the City of Philadelphia. Why did Philadelphia’s LGBTQ+ community select to change the traditional flag? What are some of the reasons people celebrated it, and why were some people upset? What is your opinion? To learn more, go to www.morecolormorepride.com.

Exploring Identity



ACTION PROJECT

In 1984, a group of LGBTQ+ activists raised money to help families affected by the British miners' strike, at the outset of what would become the Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners campaign. The alliance was unlike any seen before and was ultimately successful. It gained such recognition that it was made into a movie in 2014. Watch "Pride Official Trailer #1 (2014)" by Movieclips Trailers at www.youtube.com.

When we build alliances, we gather more strength and power to address issues that affect us all. You, too, can help fight for the rights of others by lending your support in your school or community.

PART I

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

1. Before you can become an ally to a group facing discrimination, you should know some basic rules that will help you navigate different spaces. Watch "5 Tips for Being An Ally" by chescaleigh at www.youtube.com.
2. Identify a group that you would like to advocate for. Research the struggles that that community is facing and the history behind their cause. Start by reading about the founders and their reason for starting the movement (like the Black Lives Matter movement). Then, look up what actions they are taking to advance their cause, and how their campaign functions. Google News is a great tool to search the most current newspaper articles related to a movement you want to investigate.
3. The GSA Club and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Club at Vista Ridge High School, in Cedar Park, TX, formed a coalition to battle a divisive school environment. To learn more, read "Student-created anti-bullying club is now in every Leander school" from www.mystatesman.com.

PART II

TAKE ACTION

1. Build a coalition at your school. Identify an after-school club in your school that, just like a Gender & Sexuality Alliance (GSA), is a place for a group of people with similar struggles coming together to support and advocate for themselves.
2. If you have a GSA at your school, invite the other club to one of your meetings to discuss the issues the community is facing and how you can unite to support and advocate for each other. Find the commonalities that intersect between the two clubs.
3. Based on your discussion, create an event in your local community that raises awareness and/or advocates for the issues that the two clubs have in common. Sunset Park High School's GSA in Brooklyn, NY, teamed up with the DREAMERS Club, an after-school club for undocumented immigrants, to paint a mural. It was completed with the help of local artists to inform the community of their rights when dealing with police. To learn more, read "Up against the wall: 'Cop Watch' mural teaches civil rights" from the Brooklyn Paper.

Living Authentically



“What happened to your job as a court reporter?”

“I dressed up like a man, but the judge saw changes thanks to the estrogen. He asked if he should call me Mr. or Miss, so I told him, and my contract got terminated.”

KEN JONES AND CECILIA
When We Rise, Night 3

What does it mean to live as your authentic self?

Have you ever hidden a component of your identity out of fear of how others might react? If so, how did that feel, and if not, how do you think that might feel? In this section, we will look at the ways in which authenticity comes into play within the stories of *When We Rise*.

EXPLORING IDENTITY AND FINDING PRIDE

San Francisco plays a central role at the start of the series - and for good reason. For Roma, Ken, and Cleve, living in San Francisco gives them some level of insulation from the larger society, as well as increased opportunity to experience a community that embraces same-sex attraction. However, all three characters experience ongoing challenges to living an “out” life as they age and have new experiences.

Roma’s experience within feminist circles who believe in the power and rights of women, but eschew the lesbian community, causes

her to shield her sexuality from the group for a time until she can no longer stand by an organization that does not accept all women. Ken’s experience in his time in the military and within his faith requires a clear line between his sexuality and his personal and professional life until he is able to find a community that accepts all pieces of his identity. Cleve’s visibility within the AIDS movement threatens his safety and his life at several points throughout the series, but his participation in this movement is central to who he is and what he believes. Each of the characters in the series experiences the world differently due to their identities and the perceptions of their identities by the world



To learn more about how this theme relates to someone’s personal story, watch this video from a [Live Out Loud](http://www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise) role model available at www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise and www.liveoutloud.info/WhenWeRise.

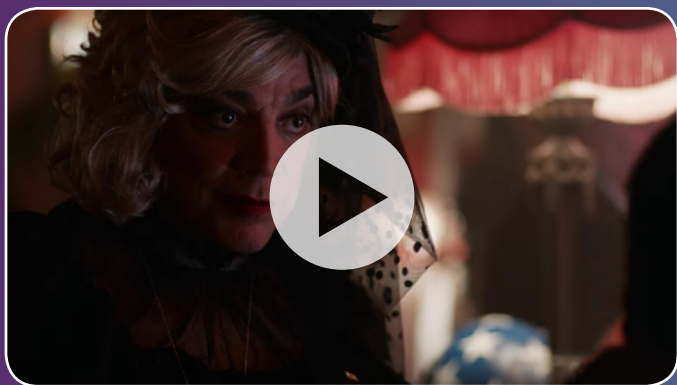
around them, and in turn, each character takes a different path to living their most authentic life.

Figuring out who we are and who we want to be is integral to the human experience. For many LGBTQ+ individuals, this journey can be incredibly complex, as living our authentic lives can threaten our relationships and in some cases, our safety. In our discussion today, we seek to consider how finding pride and joy in who they are shapes the lives of each of the main characters, and in turn, how we might develop a more welcoming and safe environment for all people to explore their identities and live as their authentic selves.

Living Authentically

CLIPS TO WATCH FROM *WHEN WE RISE*

Below are selected clips from *When We Rise* that pertain to the discussion questions, additional resources, websites, and lesson plans on the following pages. With these resources, educators can choose to have a discussion using the questions provided, or explore each discussion as a separate lesson, utilizing the linked lesson plans and resources.



NIGHT 1, PART 2: Ken finds a place to have a drink where he does not have to hide who he is, and Jose Sarria shares a thought with him on why that's so important.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **0:30-3:27**



NIGHT 1, PART 2: Roma and other members of NOW come out as lesbians at the national convention, and Cleve comes into contact with different factions within the movement.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **30:04-33:40**



NIGHT 2, PART 1: Roma talks about what it means to be living a "true life," while Ken comes out in front of a national audience.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **30:53-33:46**



NIGHT 2, PART 2: Roma tells Diane that they are family because of their love for one another.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **36:45-38:45**

Living Authentically

DISCUSSION 1

- What were some of the challenges the characters of *When We Rise* experienced when coming out?
- How do you think their experiences differed?

LESSON PLAN

“Pride and Coming Out,” Lesson 1 in [Finding Pride](#) from [It Gets Better Project](#) and [Journeys in Film](#)

Students will be able to identify components of privilege and heterosexism to reflect on personal behaviors and beliefs about sexuality and coming out as LGBTQ+. [experiential, visual, tactile]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[Human Rights Campaign: Explore: Coming Out](#)



<https://www.hrc.org/explore/topic/coming-out>

DISCUSSION 2

Think of an example of bullying you’ve either experienced or witnessed.

- How did that experience impact you or others?
- What did you do, or what do you wish you or someone else might have done to create a safer and more inclusive community?

LESSON PLAN

“Pride and Community,” Lesson 2 in [Finding Pride](#) from [It Gets Better Project](#) and [Journeys in Film](#)

Students will be able to personally define community and identify structures and systems that create community among people. [experiential, kinesthetic, discussion]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[Stop Bullying](#)



<https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

Living Authentically

DISCUSSION 3

Have you ever had a “secret” that you struggled with at school or a part of your identity that you did not share with others?

- What made it challenging?
- What helped you?

LESSON PLAN

“Exploring Identity”
from the [POV Community Network](#)

Students will explore how factors such as race, religion, and family shape a person’s personal identity. They will then create self-portraits made up of objects, symbols, and/or imagery that represent various parts of their identities. [visual, discussion]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[Post Secret](#)



<https://postsecret.com/>

DISCUSSION 4

- What do you think holds people back from living as their full authentic selves?
- Are there ways in which your “inner self” and “outer self” differ?
- When do you feel like you are your “truest” self and why?

LESSON PLAN

“Pride and Gender,” Lesson 4 in [Finding Pride](#)
from [It Gets Better Project](#) and [Journeys in Film](#)

Students will be able to think critically about the ways traditional gender expectations limit self-expression and undermine self-respect. [visual, discussion]

USEFUL ARTICLE

“What Does It Mean to Be Your Authentic Self?”
from [The Blog at HuffPost](#)



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4TRUCShh4wRbEpqWmhPTTdQX28/view>

Living Authentically



ACTION PROJECT

In *When We Rise*, Ken struggles with the conflicts that arise from his different identities and the compromises he has to make in being secretive or proud of an identity depending on his environment. To this day, there are many LGBTQ+ individuals who struggle to find their identity and arrive at a place of pride. A recent film that explores these identities is the Academy Award-winning *Moonlight*. To learn more, watch “*‘Moonlight’ Director, Barry Jenkins*” from *The Root* at www.youtube.com. Individuals, just like yourself witnessed an injustice, decided to unite against it, and take action. Now it's your turn to go out there and continue the fight for the rights of the LGBTQ+ community.

PART I

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

As we come of age, we embark on a journey to find our identity. It is important to find people to look up to, who have gone through similar struggles, as well as seek to help those who are on similar journeys. There are different forces at work that prevent us from living our lives authentically. They can be internal, societal, or professional.

INTERNAL Carmen Carrera, an American reality TV star and transgender rights advocate, struggled internally with first coming to terms with her sexuality, then discovering her true gender identity. To learn more, watch “*Model Carmen Carrera On RuPaul’s Drag Race And What It Feels Like to Transition*” by SELF Magazine at www.youtube.com.

SOCIETAL Lee O’Rourke, District Vice President of Macy’s, came out later in life due to the lack of LGBTQ+ visibility in her hometown, and pressure to conform to societal expectations. To learn more, watch “*Coming Out Later in Life*” by Erika Rydell at www.youtube.com.

PROFESSIONAL Robbie Rogers, an Major League Soccer (MLS) player, repressed his sexuality due to the homophobic culture in his professional field to the point where he had to leave the MLS when he first came out. To learn more, watch “*Robbie Rogers | Anderson Cooper 360*” by Robbie Rogers Fan at www.youtube.com. Are there any protections lacking in your state, or any changes you would like to see implemented?

Which one of the stories do you relate to the most? Can you think of any of your peers that are struggling or celebrating their different identities??

PART II

TAKE ACTION

We edit ourselves all the time, temporarily living in secrecy in mundane situations. This is how Carmen, Lee, and Robbie felt in their communities. Sometimes we don’t understand why people behave or act a certain way. Elementary school teacher Kyle Schwartz changed her school environment by giving her students a way to anonymously share what they wish others knew. To learn more, read “*#IWishMyTeacherKnew shares students’ heartbreak, hopes*” from CNN.

1. Put a spin on Kyle Schwartz’s project and start an “I wish my classmates knew...” campaign at your school. Create a bulletin board in a high-traffic area of your school for all to see the struggles they face, or identities they want to celebrate, as well as space for other classmates to write notes of support.
2. Share on social media with the hashtags [#IWishMyClassmatesKnew](https://twitter.com/IWishMyClassmatesKnew), and tag [Live Out Loud](https://twitter.com/LiveOutLoud) and [It Gets Better Project](https://twitter.com/ItGetsBetterProject), to make your campaign go viral and change other school communities in the world.

As actress and activist Laverne Cox has said, “All the things that make me uniquely and beautifully trans—my big hands, my big feet, my wide shoulders, my deep voice—all of these things are beautiful. I’m not beautiful despite these things. I’m beautiful because of them.”

Securing Equality



"And the vote in Miami is 18,930 for repeal. The gay rights ordinance in Florida is going to be repealed... it's over."

"Tonight, the laws of God and the cultural values of man have been vindicated! The normal majority, have said: Enough, enough, enough."

News clips of
WALTER CRONKITE & ANITA BRYANT
When We Rise, Night I

What if there were laws preventing you from being able to live your authentic life?

Have you ever protested a law or political decision?
How does the personal become political in America?
In this section, we will look at the ways in which politics come into play within the stories of *When We Rise*.



To learn more about how this theme relates to someone's personal story, watch this video from a [Live Out Loud](http://www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise) role model available at www.itgetsbetter.org/WhenWeRise and www.liveoutloud.info/WhenWeRise.

FIGHTING FOR RIGHTS

The fight for rights in America for LGBTQ+ people is central to the story in *When We Rise* and gives us introductions to so many of the characters in the story, from Cleve Jones and Harvey Milk to Roma Guy and Bobbi Campbell. These stories and efforts, juxtaposed to the efforts of Anita Bryant and other anti-LGBTQ+ activists and politicians, clearly demonstrate the different views of people based on their privilege and their definition of humanity. From fighting for anti-discrimination laws to marriage equality, the characters of *When We Rise* are seeking both acceptance from society as a whole and acceptance within the confines of the law.

This political struggle is interwoven into many other struggles for equality for marginalized communities. From Roma's push for gender equality, Ken's experiences within communities of color in their work for equity in civil rights, to Cleve's work for acknowledgement and access to care for individuals living with HIV/AIDS, each character is invested not only in the fight for rights for their own community but also engage in the struggle for rights for millions of others.

There are moments of heartbreak, like the repeal of the Florida ordinance (to learn more, see "[Save Our Children](http://www.wikipedia.org)" at www.wikipedia.org). There are moments of anxiety, such as the proposal for the Briggs Initiative that would prevent LGBTQ+

individuals from working in public schools in California. Nonetheless, there are also incredible moments of celebration and excitement, such as the moment of marriage equality passing through the Supreme Court. With each wave of political change in America, we also see more and more members of the LGBTQ+ community finding their voice in the United States. In our discussion today, we seek to consider how the political arena shapes the identity of a community as a whole, as well as the level of access and privilege throughout our nation. By understanding the ways in which laws and politics affect members of community, we can find a clearer path forward in making change and striving for equity for all.

Securing Equality

CLIPS TO WATCH FROM *WHEN WE RISE*

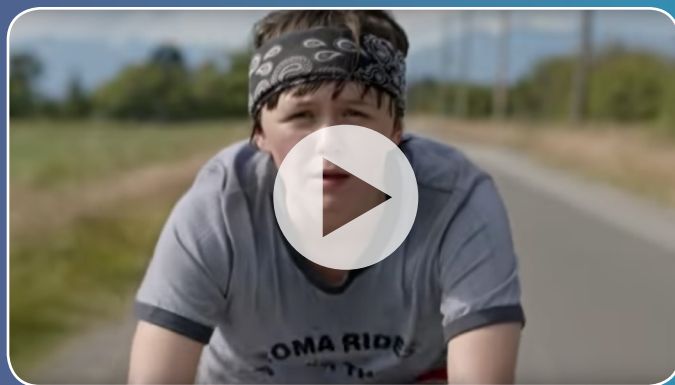
Below are selected clips from *When We Rise* that pertain to the discussion questions, additional resources, websites, and lesson plans on the following pages. With these resources, educators can choose to have a discussion using the questions provided, or explore each discussion as a separate lesson, utilizing the linked lesson plans and resources.



NIGHT 1, PART 1: Roma discusses current issues facing women and lesbians in the San Francisco area with a women's group in San Francisco.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **26:40-28:58**



NIGHT 2, PART 1: Clips play showing some of the political discussion of referendums and laws throughout the nation barring homosexuality in the late 1970s.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

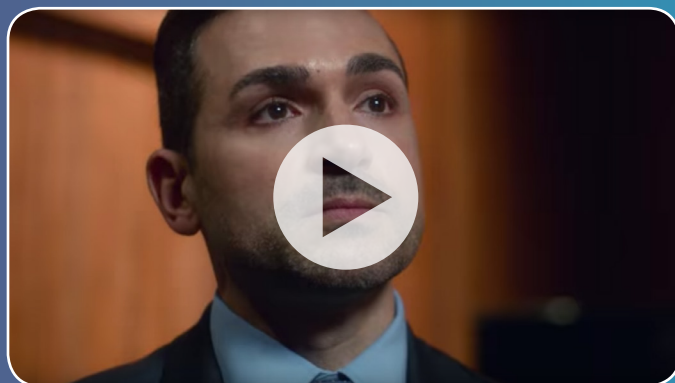
 **0:30-1:30**



NIGHT 2, PART 1: News clips of John Briggs discussing Proposition 6, an effort to eliminate any LGBTQ+ individuals from working for the Board of Education, and the reactions of several of the main characters.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **9:51-10:46**



NIGHT 4, PART 1: The characters await the fate of Proposition 8.

 **ON YOUTUBE & ITUNES:**

 **0:30-4:27**

Securing Equality

DISCUSSION 1

- What were some of the political challenges experienced throughout the narrative of *When We Rise*?
- How did these challenges interplay with other historical events occurring throughout the nation?

LESSON PLAN

“The Gay ‘80s, ‘90s, and 00’s”
from the [Learning Network](#) at [The New York Times](#)

Students will be able to research and create a timeline that illustrates how attitudes toward gay and lesbian issues have changed over the last 30 years.

USEFUL ARTICLE

“Teaching and Learning About Gay History and Issues”
from [The Learning Network](#) at [The New York Times](#)



https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1x_IWqR3xYbklyNE0zeWFNdFk/view

DISCUSSION 2

- How have politics influenced your life?
- Are there laws that impede your ability to access opportunities in America, or do you know of laws that affect others you know?
- Why is that challenging and how do these laws shape the ways in which members of our society experience the world?

LESSON PLAN

“Civic Engagement and Ways for Students to Get Involved” from [PBS NewsHour Extra](#)

Students will be able to understand the importance of civic participation and the tools which allow individuals to engage in the political process.
[research, discussion]

USEFUL ARTICLE

“10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism”
from the [Anti-Defamation League](#)



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4TRUCShh4wRbGhSHRmdTdaVlk/view>

Securing Equality

DISCUSSION 3

Think of a law that feels unfair to you currently.

- How does that law impact you or others?
- What have you done or what could you do to influence our politicians and society to change the law?

LESSON PLAN

“Privilege for Sale” from hues.xyz

Students will experience an activity in which they do not have many of the privileges they may or may not be aware of in their everyday life. [kinesthetic, discussion]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[5 Calls](http://5calls.org/)



<https://5calls.org/>

DISCUSSION 4

- What do you think will be the next social battle that is fought through political change?
- What makes you think that?

LESSON PLAN

“Resource Guide: Assessing Sources” from PBS.org

Students will develop an understanding of the relationship between politics and current issues, thereby gaining an appreciation for the role of politics in daily life. [kinesthetic, visual, discussion]

USEFUL WEBSITE

[I Side With](http://www.isidewith.com)



<https://www.isidewith.com/polls/social>

Securing Equality



ACTION PROJECT

Throughout history, LGBTQ+ individuals have had to hide their identity to avoid persecution. In order to prevent perpetuating past mistakes, we need to know our history and the ways we've fought for visibility. Read "[The Plight of Being a Gay Teacher](#)" by Amanda Machado from [The Atlantic](#).

PART I

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

1. Don't Ask Don't Tell was repealed in 2011, after being in place for 17 years. To learn more about how the lives of LGBTQ+ soldiers have changed since then, read "[What The Military Is Like 5 Years After 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'](#)" from [Task & Purpose](#). And to learn more about the precarious state of transgender soldiers serving in the military, watch "[Soldier Speaks About Trump's Trans Military Ban \(HBO\)](#)" from [VICE News](#) at www.youtube.com.
2. There are many LGBTQ+ policies and protections in place for schools on the federal and state level. However, many times schools are unaware of these policies or simply don't implement them. To learn about federal policies, click [here](#), or go to www.gsafewi.org and click on 'For Youth & GSAs,' then 'Legal Rights,' then 'Know Your Rights - Federal Laws Protecting GSAs and LGBTQ+ Students.' To learn about state policies, go to www.glsen.org/article/state-maps.

Did you know about these policies and laws affecting LGBTQ+ individuals? If not, how can we raise awareness so that people are informed and proactive?

PART II

TAKE ACTION

1. Start a campaign to inform the student body of their rights. Create a "Know Your Rights" one-sheet to display and hand out in your school. Put up a comments box in a common area for students to express what policies and rights they would like to see in place at your school.
2. Look up your local city council member and your state DOE commissioner at www.nlc.org/advocacy/take-action. Become your school's liaison by informing elected officials of what issues, concerns, and lack of policy implementation you may discover in your school and demand that they are addressed and amended. Also be sure to thank them for policies and protections that are being adhered to and are successful in protecting student rights.

Remember that in order to make change we have to fully understand what is currently in place that is either aiding progress or thwarting it. Only then can we create the change we want to see in our communities.

Marching Forward



“Who here thinks we were wrong to go in there today and demand that the Constitution include us? . . . No matter the outcome, we’ve already won. Because you dared to stand up and fight.”

CLEVE JONES

When We Rise, Night IV

The story of When We Rise covers decades of change for the LGBTQ+ community in America, but the story is not over.

It’s true: marriage equality has been realized, the AIDS/HIV epidemic is on decline in the LGBTQ+ community with the increased access to Zidovudine (AZT) and the introduction of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) drugs for HIV prevention, and increased visibility of the community in mainstream media is leading to increased social acceptance. However, there are ongoing issues of opportunity and access for the community.

Below are a host of issues and events that have occurred following the close of the series in 2016 and 2017. These only represent a small sampling of the successes and concerns facing the LGBTQ+ community today. You should explore and consider other news and events that may be occurring in your community now.



To learn more about how this theme relates to someone’s personal story, watch this video from a Live Out Loud role model available at www.itgets-better.org/WhenWeRise and www.liveoutloud.info/WhenWeRise.

Marching Forward

IN JUNE 2016, the Stonewall National Monument was designated as the United States' first national monument for an LGBTQ+ historic site. To learn more, read "President Obama Designates Stonewall National Monument" from www.whitehouse.gov.

IN NOVEMBER 2016, Kate Brown was elected as the first openly LGBTQ+ governor in the United States. She currently serves as the governor of Oregon. To learn more, read "For First Time, Openly LGBT Governor Elected: Oregon's Kate Brown" from NPR.

IN MARCH 2017, Roy Cooper, Governor of North Carolina, repealed and replaced a controversial bill that required transgender individuals to use the bathroom corresponding to the sex listed on their birth certificate. To learn more, read "North Carolina governor signs bill repealing and replacing transgender bathroom law amid criticism" from the Washington Post.

JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

2017

2016

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP

IN FEBRUARY 2017, Moonlight won the Oscar for Best Motion Picture - Drama, making it the first LGBTQ+ focused film to win that Academy Award. To learn more, read "'Moonlight' is the first LGBT movie to win best picture. Here's why it matters" from Salon.

IN FEBRUARY 2017, President Trump signed a directive rescinding former federal protections for transgender students to utilize restrooms that correspond to their gender identity. To learn more, read "Trump Rescinds Rules on Bathrooms for Transgender Students" from The New York Times.

IN FEBRUARY 2017, Joe Maldonado, age 9, became the Boy Scouts of America's first openly transgender member after his story became nationally known in 2016. To learn more, read "'I Felt Like I Belonged There': Transgender Cub Scout Breaks Barrier" from The New York Times.

IN AUGUST 2017, President Trump signed a directive that stated that transgender individuals would no longer be allowed to serve in the US Military. To learn more, read "Trump signs transgender military ban" from POLITICO.

IN SEPTEMBER 2017, Edie Windsor, hero to the marriage equality movement as the plaintiff in the landmark case, Windsor v. United States, passed away, leaving behind a tremendous legacy behind. To learn more, read "That time Edie Windsor got angry - and changed America" from the Washington Post.

Marching Forward

DISCUSSION

In this section, we recommend you select 3-4 articles or websites from the timeline, or research online to find articles touching on issues impacting the LGBTQ+ community that have occurred since 2017. In some educational spaces, you might consider splitting the articles among small groups and have them share out to the larger group. As we read, consider the following questions:

- How is the LGBTQ+ community and experience in America today similar to the experiences we witnessed throughout *When We Rise*? How is it different?
- Which issues are of most concern to you? Why? How do the experiences of the people in these stories relate to your lived experience? How do they differ?
- How can you be a change agent in your community to improve the safety and acceptance of people in your community?



Marching Forward



ACTION PROJECT

Throughout history, the LGBTQ+ community has faced persecution all over the world. Now that you've learned about the fight for equality in the U.S., it's time to look at the fight for equality worldwide.

PART I

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

1. Read "[Rudolf Brazda: Last known survivor of the 'Pink Triangle' gay inmates of Nazi concentration camps](#)" from The Independent.
2. In 2011 and 2014, a Ugandan tabloid published the identities of LGBTQ+ individuals, thereby exposing them to the harsh laws and violence against the LGBTQ+ community. To learn more, read "[Ugandan tabloid prints list of 'top 200 homosexuals'](#)" from the *Guardian*.
3. In February 2017, Chechnya's law enforcement and security officials launched an anti-gay purge. They rounded up dozens of men on suspicion of being gay and held them in unofficial detention facilities for days, violating their human rights. To learn more, watch "[100 Men Arrested in Chechnya For Being Gay](#)" by InformOverload on www.youtube.com.

Did you know about these LGBTQ+ issues going on abroad? Have you heard of any other LGBTQ+ current events outside of the U.S? Alturi.org, a website run by LGBTQ+ individuals, has the latest news affecting LGBTQ+ communities around the globe. The more you keep up with what is happening to LGBTQ+ people in the world, the more you can educate and inform others to take action.

PART II

TAKE ACTION

Now that you have a greater knowledge as to how LGBTQ+ rights are challenged or non-existent in some places in the world, think about what actions we can take here by acting locally and thinking globally.

1. Gather your GSA peers and other allies to create your own activism piece focusing on an issue affecting LGBTQ+ individuals abroad. Find a place to display it in your school. YouTube is a great place to search for examples of activism that could help you draw inspiration. Share your work on social media using the hashtags #Activism and #LGBTQAbroad, and tag [Live Out Loud](#) and [It Gets Better Project](#) to draw more attention to your cause.

The LGBTQ+ community has been around since the beginning of time. Despite all the persecution, discrimination, and intolerance, it has united, resisted, and risen time after time to claim its rightful place in society. It is up to you, the new generation to continue fighting for the cause, and amplify those voices which need to be heard. Now rise up!

Glossary



Throughout the *When We Rise* miniseries, the characters used a variety of labels to identify themselves. These can be found below. Some of them are used universally by LGBTQ+ people, while others may be used by specific groups or individuals. Please note that the following list is by no means comprehensive. These are simply words referenced in the series, some of which may no longer be used, as well as those that are referenced in this guide. There are many more words out there that represent the vast diversity of the LGBTQ+ community today. For many, it's a living and evolving language. To learn more, check out itgetsbetter.org/glossary.

Ally

Noun. Someone who supports equal civil rights, gender equality, and LGBTQ+ social movements; advocates on behalf of others; and challenges fear and discrimination in all its forms.

Binary

Noun. The belief that such things as gender identity have only two distinct, opposite, and disconnected forms. In other words, they believe in the gender binary, that only male and female genders exist. As a rejection of this belief, many people embrace a non-binary gender identity (see Gender Nonconforming).

Bisexual, or bi

Adjective. Someone who is attracted to those of their same gender as well as to those of a different gender (for

example, a woman who is attracted to both women and men). Some people use the word bisexual as an umbrella term to describe individuals that are attracted to more than one gender. In this way, the term is closely related to pansexual, or omnisexual, meaning someone who is attracted to people of any gender identity.

Butch, or masc

Adjective. Someone whose gender expression is masculine. Butch is sometimes used as a derogatory term for lesbians, but it can also be claimed as an affirmative identity label. In many communities of color in the United States, words like “stud” and “aggressive” are commonly used instead. Other gender expressions include androgynous (or androgyne, someone who presents as neither male or female, mixed, or neutral), femme

(or fem, someone whose gender expression is feminine), and stemme (or stem, someone whose gender expression is both masculine and feminine).

Cisgender, or cis

Adjective. A person whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth.

Coming Out

Verb, noun. The process through which a person accepts their sexual orientation and/or gender identity as part of their overall identity. For many, this involves sharing that identity with others, which makes it more of a lifetime process rather than just a one-time experience.

Glossary

Crossdresser

Noun. Someone who wears clothes associated with a different gender. This activity is a form of gender expression, and is not always done for entertainment purposes. Many crossdressers may not wish to present as a different gender all of the time. (NOTE: Avoid using the term “transvestite.”)

Drag

Noun, adjective. The act of presenting as a different gender, usually for the purpose of entertainment (i.e. drag kings and queens). Many people who do drag may not wish to present as a different gender all of the time.

Femme, or fem

Adjective. Someone whose gender expression is feminine.

Gay

Adjective. Someone who is attracted to those of their same gender. This is often used as an umbrella term, but is used more specifically to describe men who are attracted to men. (NOTE: Avoid using the term “homosexual.” Because of the clinical history of the word, many feel that the term suggests that gay people are somehow diseased or psychologically/emotionally disordered.)

Gender Affirmation Surgery

Noun. Medical procedures that some individuals elect to undergo to change their physical appearance to more closely resemble how they view their gender identity. (NOTE: Avoid saying inaccurate phrases such as “sex change,” “gender reassignment surgery,” “pre- or post-operative,” and, in general, avoid overemphasizing surgery when discussing transgender people or the process of transition.)

Gender Nonconforming

Adjective. Someone whose gender identity and/or gender expression does not conform to the cultural or social expectations of gender, particularly in relation to male or female. This can be an umbrella term for many identities including, but not limited to agender, bigender, genderfluid, genderqueer, intergender, and pangender.

Intersectionality

Noun. The idea that multiple identities intersect to create a whole that is different from its distinct parts. To understand someone, it is important to acknowledge that each of their identities is important and inextricably linked with all of the others. These can include identities related to gender, race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, age, mental and/or physical ability, and more.

Lesbian

Adjective, noun. A woman who is attracted to other women. Some lesbians prefer to identify as gay women.

LGBTQ+

Adjective. The acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender” (sometimes seen as “GLBT”). The plus sign represents the fact that many communities choose to expand the acronym to include other identities. For example, while it is common in the United States to see “LGBT” or “LGBTQ+” (for queer), it is more common to see “LGBTI” (for intersex) in Europe.

Pride

Noun. The celebration of LGBTQ+ identities, and of the global LGBTQ+ community’s resistance against discrimination and violence. Pride events are celebrated in many countries around the world, usually during the month of June to commemorate the Stonewall Riots that began in New York City in June 1969, a pivotal moment in the modern LGBTQ+ movement.

Glossary

Queer

Adjective. In a very basic sense, anyone who is not heterosexual and/or cisgender. In the past, queer was a negative or pejorative term for people who are gay, and thus it is sometimes disliked. But the term is increasingly being used to describe all identities and politics that go against normative beliefs. As such, the term is valued by many LGBTQ+ people for its defiance and by others who find it to be an appropriate term to describe their more fluid identities.

Straight, or heterosexual

Adjective. A word to describe women who are attracted to men and men who are attracted to women. This is not exclusive to those who are cisgender. For example, some transgender men identify as straight because they are attracted to women.

They/Them/Their

Pronouns. One of many sets of gender-neutral singular pronouns in English that can be used as an alternative to he/him/his or she/her/hers. Usage of this particular set is becoming more and more prevalent, particularly within the LGBTQ+ community.

Transgender, or trans

Adjective. Someone whose gender identity differs from the one that was assigned to them at birth. Many transgender people identify as either male or female, while others may see transgender as an umbrella term and identify as gender nonconforming or queer. How transgender people choose to express their gender is individualistic, as is their transition. (NOTE: Avoid using transgender as a noun, as in “a transgender,” or with an extraneous -ed on the end, as in “transgendered.”)

Transition

Noun. The process through which some transgender people change their gender expression to more closely resemble how they view their gender identity. This can include personal, medical, and legal steps, such as: using a different name and pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; or gender affirmation surgery. Some transgender people may not choose to make these changes or may only make a few. The experience is an individualistic one; there is no right or wrong way to transition.

About It Gets Better Project & Live Out Loud



The It Gets Better Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Los Angeles, California. With affiliates operating on 4 different continents, the It Gets Better Project boasts a truly global operation. Together, they use the power of story - told through online videos, social media, films, television specials (like *When We Rise*) books, and more - to uplift, empower, and connect LGBTQ+ youth around the globe. So far, over 60,000 It Gets Better videos have been shared.

The It Gets Better Project has also identified over 1,100 organizations in 30+ countries around the globe offering support to LGBTQ+ youth. To find a resource near you or anywhere in the world, go to www.itgetsbetter.org/GetHelp.

FOLLOW THE ORGANIZATION ON:

Website: www.itgetsbetter.org

You Tube: www.youtube.com/itgetsbetter

Facebook: www.facebook.com/itgetsbetterproject

Twitter: twitter.com/ItGetsBetter

Tumblr: itgetsbetterproject.tumblr.com

Instagram: www.instagram.com/itgetsbetter



Live Out Loud is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in New York City, New York. By providing youth with opportunities to interact with adults who understand the realities of living openly as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, Live Out Loud helps young people to achieve academic success, healthy relationships, rewarding careers, and a fulfilling life. Live Out Loud forges these crucial connections through innovative, hands-on initiatives that include: bringing positive LGBTQ+ role models into classrooms and schools; bringing LGBTQ+ youth into workplaces to meet LGBTQ+ professionals from all walks of life; and providing financial and mentoring support to young scholars and leaders.

FOLLOW THE ORGANIZATION ON:

Website: www.liveoutloud.info

You Tube: www.youtube.com/liveoutloudinfo

Facebook: www.facebook.com/liveoutloudinfo

Twitter: www.twitter.com/liveoutloudinfo

Instagram: www.instagram.com/liveoutloudinfo

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